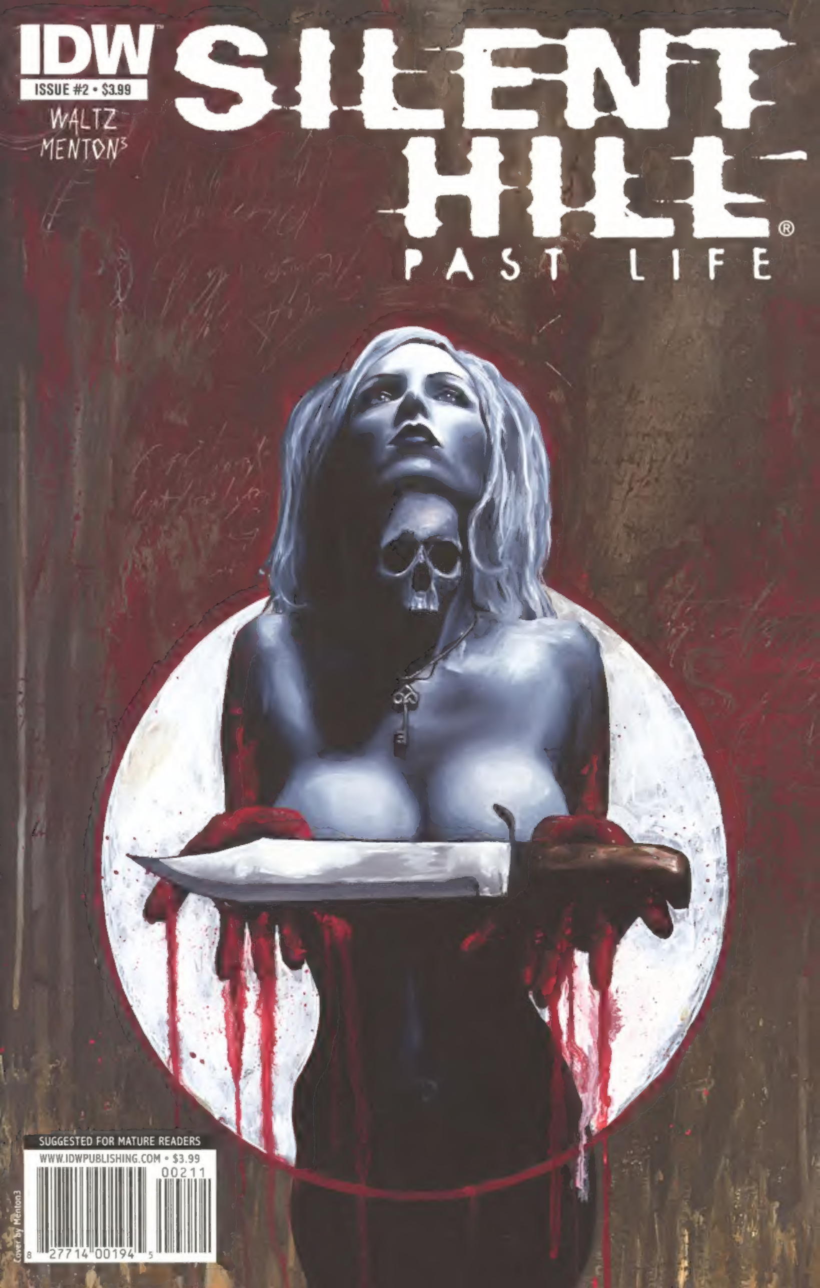
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PAST LIFE

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The year is 1867. Jebediah Foster and his wife Esther have left the Dakota Territory and headed east for a new life in Silent Hill. It is an opportunity for a fresh start they both crave. A chance to leave behind a dark past...

COVER CHECKLIST:

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MAYBE I DONE TOO MUCH, ESTHER...
...MAYBE IT'S TOO LATE FOR ME. A GOOD LIFE, I MEAN.
MAYBE THAT AIN'T IN THE CARDS FOR ME, Y'KNOW? MAYBE ALL THEM SINS IS TOO MUCH AND THERE AIN'T NO SAVIN' ME.
WHY DO YOU FRET SO, JEBEDIAH? YOU'VE GOT US, DON'T YOU?
THE BABY AND ME.
WE'LL MAKE EVERYTHING GOOD AGAIN, YOU'LL SEE.
TOGETHER...

...WE'LL SAVE YOU.

CHRIST!
MMMF.. WHA.. WHAT'S WRONG, JEBEDIAH?
IT... IT...
...IT'S NOTHIN', ESTHER. GO BACK TO SLEEP...
...I WAS HAVIN' A BAD DREAM, IS ALL.
OH...
...THAT'S GOOD.
CHRIST!

ESTHER?
MMMF.. WHA... WHAT'S WRONG, JEBEDIAH?
UH... NOTHIN'. GO BACK TO SLEEP...
...EVERYTHING'S OKAY.
OH...
...THAT'S GOOD.

I DON'T SEE WHY YOU FEEL THE NEED TO DO THIS, JEBEDIAH.
I TOLD YOU, ESTHER, I AIN'T GONNA STAND FOR IT.
BUT SHE'S JUST AN OLD WOMAN WHO'S LOST SOME OF HER WITS, JEB. THAT'S ALL.
A CRAZY OLD WOMAN WHO BROUGHT THIS GODDAMNED THING INTO MY HOUSE, YOU MEAN!
JEBEDIAH! SUCH LANGUAGE!
LOOK, I'M SORRY, I AIN'T TRYIN' TO STIR YOU UP, 'SPECIALLY IN YOUR CONDITION.
BUT, I MEAN IT, ESTHER, I AIN'T STANDIN' FOR NO HALFWIT INJUN WOMAN BARGIN' INTO MY HOUSE WITH A KNIFE, BLEEDIN' LIKE SHE'S SOME STUCK PIG AND SPOUTIN' OFF NONSENSE.
WHAT'LL YOU DO, THEN?
I SAW A SHERIFF'S SIGN WHEN WE PASSED THROUGH TOWN. I'LL TAKE IT UP WITH HIM.
NOTHIN' LEGAL ABOUT WHAT SHE DONE, AND EVERYONE'S ALWAYS SAYIN' THE LAW'S SUPPOSED TO MEAN MORE OUT EAST.
I AIM TO FIND OUT IF IT'S TRUE.

Sheriff
DAMN. LOCKED.
Sh
'FRAID THERE'S NOBODY IN THERE RIGHT NOW, MISTER, UH...
...FOSTER, IS IT?
JEB'S FINE. WHERE'S THE SHERIFF?
AWAY FOR A LITTLE BIT... DOWN AT TOLUCA.

WHAT'S TOLUCA?
THAT'D BE THE PRISON. USED TO BE A PRISONER OF WAR CAMP, BUT NOW WITH THAT MESS BEHIND US, WORK'S UNDERWAY TO CHANGE IT INTO A NORMAL PRISON FOR CRIMINALS AND SUCH.
SHERIFF CREVISTON SPENDS MOST MORNINGS DOWN THAT WAY, KEEPIN' AN EYE ON THE WORK BEIN' DONE. NOT THAT THOSE DOIN' THE WORK NEED ANY HELP—THIS WHOLE TOWN WAS A PENAL COLONY AT ONE TIME, SO MAINTAININ' PRISONS AIN'T NOTHIN' NEW 'ROUND HERE.
WHAT'D YOU SAY THE SHERIFF'S NAME WAS?
CREVISTON. SETH CREVISTON. YOU KNOW HIM?
I... NO. NAME SEEMS AWFULLY FAMILIAR, BUT... NO, DON'T KNOW 'IM.
LOOK, UH... WHAT'S YOUR NAME AGAIN?
HOWARD.
HOWARD. RIGHT. LOOK, HOWARD, THERE ANY PLACE I CAN GRAB SOME FOOD 'ROUND HERE WHILE I WAIT FOR THE SHERIFF TO GET BACK? I AIN'T PICKY, LONG AS IT'S HOT AND THEY GOT COFFEE TO GO WITH IT.
LEEK'S TAVERN'S GOT WHAT YOU'RE LOOKIN' FOR, RIGHT ACROSS THE WAY. FOOD'S GOOD, COFFEE'S ALWAYS BREWIN', AND, WHO KNOWS...
...YOU MIGHT EVEN BE ABLE TO SCARE UP SOME INTERESTIN' CONVERSATION WHILE YOU'RE THERE.
LEEK'S TAVERN

CAN I HELP YOU?
THAT NEGRO POSTMASTER SAYS YOU GOT SOME DECENT GRUB HERE.
YEAH, FOOD'S FINE.
GOOD. I'LL TAKE A PLATE OF EGGS AND BACON, IF YOU GOT 'EM.
THAT ALL?
NAH, COFFEE, TOO... THE HOTTER THE BETTER.
COFFEE? YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?
YEAH, COFFEE. WHY? THAT A PROBLEM?
NO PROBLEM. JUST SURPRISED, IS ALL. IT SURE AIN'T YOUR NORMAL ORDER.
"AIN'T MY NORMAL...?"
MISTER, WHAT ARE YOU—?
WELL, BLESS ME FOR A FOOL, LOOK WHO DROPPED IN OUTTA PLUM NOWHERE...

...IF IT AIN'T... THE HELLRIDER HIMSELF, IN THE FLESH
DON'T KNOW HOW YOU COME BY THAT NAME, LADY, BUT IT AIN'T ONE I USE NO MORE. 'PRECIATE IT IF YOU DON'T, NEITHER
WHAT? NO HELLRIDER? I DON'T BELIEVE IT. YOU WAS ALWAYS SO PROUD OF BEIN' CALLED THAT
LOOK, I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, BUT I ADVISE YOU GET TO MINDIN' YOUR OWN BUSINESS AND LEAVE ME BE
MY, MY! STILL A ROUGH AND MEAN ONE, AIN'T YOU?
'COURSE, WE BOTH KNOW I LIKE IT ROUGH AND MEAN, DON'T WE?
ENOUGH!
THAT'S ENOUGH, HELENE!

OH, IGNORE JONAS' BLUSTERING, HELLRIDER. HE WAS ALWAYS SO JEALOUS.
REMEMBER?
I SAID, THAT'S ENOUGH, WOMAN!
UNH!
YOU TRYIN' TO BE A BIG MAN, JONAS, ARE YOU? A BIG MAN WHO HURTS LITTLE GIRLS, IS THAT IT?
DAMMIT, HELENE, YOU SHUT YER MOUTH BEFORE—
BEFORE WHAT, HUH?
HA!
NOTHIN' TO SAY, HUH? I FIGURED AS MUCH. SAME DAMNED COWARD AS ALWAYS.
YOU STILL GOT THAT BIG KNIFE OF YOURS, HELLRIDER? SEEMS JONAS NEEDS HELP PUTTIN' HIS WIFE BACK IN LINE AGAIN. NOTHIN'S CHANGED IN THAT REGARD.
KNIFE? WHA—?
THIS HOW WE GREET NEW FOLKS TO TOWN, JONAS

..OR IS THERE A PROBLEM HERE I SHOULD KNOW ABOUT?
NO, SHERIFF... NO PROBLEMS.
WELL, I'M GLAD TO HEAR THERE AIN'T NOTHIN' WRONG HAPPENIN'.
POSTMASTER SAID YOU WAS LOOKIN' FOR ME?
UH, YEAH. WANTED TO REPORT A TRESPASSER INTO MY HOME LAST NIGHT
HA! YOU REPORTIN' A TRESPASSER?! IF THAT AIN'T THE POT CALLIN' THE KETTLE BLACK, I DON'T KNOW WHAT IS.
HEE HEE
BEST YOU KEEP QUIET, JONAS. IT AIN'T THE TIME FOR THAT NOW, AND YOU KNOW IT
UM, YEAH.. SORRY, SHERIFF
NOW, HOW 'BOUT ME AND YOU HEAD OVER TO MY STATION TO TALK ABOUT THIS TRESPASSER?
YEAH... ALL RIGHT
COME BACK SOON, HELLRIDER. DON'T YOU GO *FORGETTIN'* ME AGAIN.
SHUT UP, WOMAN!

THOSE TWO CRAZY, OR WHAT?
THE LEEKS? YEAH, THEY GOT THEIR ISSUES, YOU COULD SAY
BUT THEY AIN'T NO MORE CRAZY THAN ANYONE ELSE 'ROUND HERE, I SUPPOSE
JONAS AND HELENE ARE JUST DEALIN' WITH WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL SKELETONS IN THEIR CLOSET
WHICH, LIKE I SAID, MAKES 'EM THE SAME AS MOST FOLKS
HOW BOUT YOU, MISTER FOSTER

"...YOU GOT ANY OL' SKELETONS HAUNTIN' YOU?"
SO MUCH BLESSED DUST. WHERE'D IT ALL COME FROM?
I'M NEVER GONNA GET THIS—
—OH!

HURRY! THEY'RE COMING! YOU NEED TO PUSH!
YAAGH! BUT IT HURTS, MOTHER! IT HURTS!
YOU HAVE TO IGNORE THE PAIN, DAUGHTER! THERE'S NO TIME! THEY'RE SO CLOSE!
GAH... MOTHER.
...MOTHER!
NNHH

YOU KNOW MY NAME?
I'M THE SHERIFF. IT'S MY JOB TO KNOW, MISTER FOSTER.
WELL, I DON'T KNOW NOTHIN' 'BOUT NO SKELETONS, SHERIFF, BUT I LEFT MY PAST BEHIND ME WHEN I COME HERE, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE IMPLYIN'
YEP, THE PAST IS WHAT I'M TALKIN' 'BOUT, AND IF YOU'RE ABLE TO PUT IT BEHIND YOU LIKE THAT, THEN GOOD FOR YOU, MISTER FOSTER. IT AIN'T AN EASY THING TO DO FOR MOST FOLKS
SOMETIMES THEM OLD SCARS RUN WAY TOO DEEP TO FORGET..
...IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE
YEAH, WELL, I DONE A LOT OF BOOZIN' IN MY TIME, ENOUGH THAT I DON'T RECALL MUCH OF WHAT COME BEFORE I PUT THE WHISKEY AWAY FOR GOOD
FOR GOOD? HEH. THAT'S AN INTERESTIN' WAY OF PUTTIN' IT
LOOK, SHERIFF, NO OFFENSE MEANT, BUT I AIN'T HERE TO TALK 'BOUT THE PAST. ME AND MY WIFE, ESTHER, HAD US AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR LAST NIGHT
OLD INJUN WOMAN, BLEEDIN' ALL TO HELL AND CARRYIN' THIS

OLD INDIAN WOMAN, YOU SAY?
YEAH. FOUND HER IN THE BEDROOM 'BOUT SCARED THE WITS OUTTA THE WIFE, WHICH AIN'T A GOOD THING CONSIDERIN' ESTHER'S FULL ON PREGNANT.
MUSTA BEEN OLD INOLA. SHE'S A CHEROKEE SQUAW THAT SHOWED UP 'ROUND HERE A LITTLE WHILE BACK. SHE MAY LOOK A LITTLE SCARY, MISTER FOSTER, BUT SHE'S HARMLESS AS THEY COME.
NOTHIN' HARMLESS ABOUT THAT BLADE IN HER HANDS, SHERIFF.
NO, NO, THERE AIN'T.
YOU SURE INOLA BROUGHT IT WITH HER? SURE IT AIN'T YOURS AND YOU JUST FORGOT?
YEAH, I'M SURE. WHY WOULD YOU ASK THAT?
IT'S JUST, A GRUFF FELLA LIKE YOURSELF SEEMS NATURAL YOU'D HAVE A BIG KNIFE OR TWO LIKE THIS AROUND.
I'VE GOT A LOT OF KNIVES, YEAH, BUT THIS ONE AIN'T MINE. THAT OLD INJUN BRUNG IT WITH HER, I'M TELLIN' YOU, AND LEFT IT BEHIND WHEN I CHASED HER OUTTA MY HOUSE.
YOU SAY YOU GOT A LOT OF KNIVES, THEN HOW ARE YOU SURE THIS ONE AIN'T YOURS?
DAMMIT, SHERIFF, A KNIFE'S A KNIFE. HOW'S SOMEONE SUPPOSED TO REMEMBER A CERTAIN ONE?
WELL, I GUESS THAT DEPENDS ON WHAT SIDE OF THE KNIFE YOU'RE ON, DON'T IT?
BUT DON'T YOU WORRY 'BOUT IT, MISTER FOSTER. I'LL HAVE A TALK WITH OLD INOLA WHEN I SEE HER NEXT. I'LL REMIND HER SHE CAN'T BE SQUATTIN' IN THE MUNROE PLACE NO MORE NOW THAT YOU AND YOUR WIFE HAVE TAKEN UP RESIDENCE.
YOU DO THAT, 'CAUSE IF SHE SHOWS UP LIKE THAT AGAIN, I'LL MAKE SURE IT'S HER LAST TIME.
YES, HELLRIDER.
I'M SURE YOU WILL.

...UP NOW, YOUNG WOMAN...
...THAT'S IT... SLOWLY...
...NO NEED TO HURRY
Y... YOU!
NOW, NOW... NO NEED TO BE FRIGHTENED. I'M JUST TRYIN' TO HELP YOU UP FROM THE HARD FLOOR, NOTHIN' MORE.
WHA... WHAT HAPPENED? I WAS... WAS SWEEPING, AND THEN...
AND THEN YOU COLLAPSED RIGHT HERE ON THIS DIRTY PORCH, WHICH IS NO PLACE FOR A WOMAN IN YOUR CONDITION TO BE.
LET ME HELP YOU UP AND INSIDE, CHILD.

WE'LL JUST GET YOU INSIDE HERE AND SET YOU DOWN FOR A SPELL.
THERE YOU GO. MUCH BETTER THAN THAT DUSTY FLOOR OUT THERE, AIN'T IT?
YE... YES. IT IS.
THANK YOU.
YOU NEEDN'T THANK ME, CHILD. I WAS HERE, AND WHEN I SAW YOU FALL IT WAS THE ONLY DECENT THING TO DO, TRULY.
NOT TO SOUND UNGRATEFUL, BUT *WHY* ARE YOU HERE? AFTER LAST NIGHT, I THOUGHT...
GOODNESS! MY HUSBAND! HE WENT TO TOWN TO REPORT YOU TO THE SHERIFF. IF HE RETURNS AND FINDS YOU HERE AGAIN, HE'LL...
YOU THOUGHT YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND RUN ME OFF, RIGHT?
WELL, LAST NIGHT YOU DID, IN A MANNER OF SPEAKIN', BUT TODAY I'M BACK. AND IT'S A GOOD THING I AM, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED.

HE'LL WHAT, CHILD?
HE'LL... WELL, HE'LL BE VERY UPSET, THAT'S WHAT.
I DO THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP, BUT, PLEASE, YOU REALLY SHOULD GO NOW.
IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT, CHILD, THEN I'LL GO. YOU'RE CERTAIN YOU'RE OKAY?
YES, YES... UNF... I'M FINE.
IT'S JUST... PLEASE... BEFORE JEBEDIAH GETS BACK.
I UNDERSTAND.
YOU REALLY SHOULD REST YOURSELF. THAT BABY YOU'RE CARRYIN' WILL BE WANTIN' TO JOIN US SOON.
US?
WHY, YES, CHILD. THOSE OF US WHO BEEN SO ANXIOUSLY AWAITIN' HER BIRTH.
WAIT. I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT Y—
DO YOU UNDERSTAND IRONY?
I... WHAT?
IRONY. IT'S A FANCY WORD I LEARNED FROM YOU WHITE FOLKS.
YOU SAY YOUR HUSBAND'S REPORTIN' ME TO THE SHERIFF. WELL, YOU MAY NOT WANNA ADMIT IT, BUT YOUR HUSBAND'S A VERY BAD MAN, WHO'S DONE SOME VERY BAD THINGS—
—HIM GOIN' TO THE SHERIFF LIKE THAT IS EVERYTHING I ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD IRONY TO BE.
LISTEN, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU THINK YOU KNOW ABOUT JEB, BUT WHATEVER HE DID BEFORE, HE'S A CHANGED MAN NOW.
I KNOW THAT'S WHAT YOU WANNA BELIEVE, CHILD, TRULY. BUT I TOLD YOU LAST NIGHT, THERE AIN'T NO CHANGIN' WHAT WAS, NOR WHAT IS... THERE'S ONLY CHANGIN' WHAT'S TO BE.
AND THAT'S WHY WE'VE BEEN YEARNIN' FOR THAT BABY TO COME.
THE FUTURE IS LIKE A WIDE OPEN PLAIN, YOU SEE? FILLED WITH ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES.
BUT THE PAST? THAT AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A DARK PIT...

"...JUST WAITIN' TO SWALLOW YOU UP."
TO BE CONTINUED.

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#3
ON SALE NEXT MONTH